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# Mongolia's Peacekeeping Commitment

*Training, Deployment, and Evolution of Field Information Capabilities*

Jargalsaikhan Mendee  
Colonel, Mongolian Army

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Training, Deployment, and Evolution  
of Field Information Capabilities

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Colonel, Mongolian Army



NATIONAL DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE COLLEGE  
WASHINGTON, DC

May 2007

*The views expressed in this work are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Department of Defense or the Government of Mongolia*



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# FOREWORD

MONGOLIA'S MILITARY PEACEKEEPING EXPERIENCE IS A RECENT and remarkable development, having only begun in 2002 when the State Great Hural passed a law establishing the legal framework for participation in international peace operations. This Mongolian capability, while nascent, exists at a time when the international need has never been greater and is likely to continue unabated.

In August 2002 Mongolia provided two officers to serve as Military Observers in the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the time, there were just over 44,000 United Nations troops deployed worldwide. Now, just five years later, the United Nations has over 81,000 troops and Mongolia's over 260 troops ranks it 47th among the 114 countries that provide troops. Their contribution will be all the more significant because, according to the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, by the end of 2007 the United Nations will have over 140,000 peacekeepers deployed.

In addition to its impressive participation in United Nations missions, Mongolia has been an unwavering partner on the Global War on Terrorism. It was among the first countries to join the coalition formed for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The Mongolian National Security Council authorized its military to participate in this operation on 10 April 2003. Mongolian troops were deployed to Iraq to undertake peacekeeping missions within the Polish-led Multinational Division. Mongolia also deployed a Mobile Training Team to Afghanistan to support the training of the Afghan National Army.

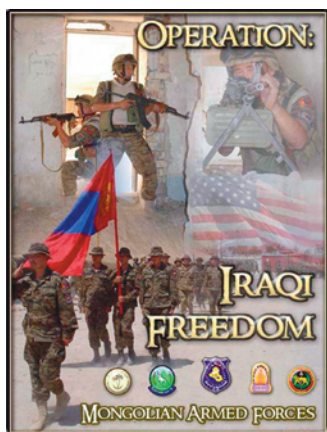
In this research paper, Colonel Jargalsaikhan Mendee, serving Defense and Military Attaché to the Embassy of Mongolia in the United States, provides an excellent account of the evolution of his country's peacekeeping experience and capacity. The paper provides a detailed description of U.S. support for Mongolia's initiatives to professionalize their force and "develop a 2,500-man world-class peacekeeping force." Most useful and insightful are Colonel Mendee's views and observations on the lessons learned thus far, as well as the challenges that remain for Mongolia. This paper also provides both civilian and military leaders with a thorough and timely case study on what countries and partners can do to build and expand credible and ready peacekeeping capacity that is so critically needed for international peace support operations.

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Timothy R. Cornett

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### **Mongolian Military Personnel in Iraq.**

Photos courtesy of the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, General Staff of the Armed Forces.

# MONGOLIA'S PEACEKEEPING COMMITMENT:

## Training, Deployment, and Evolution of Field Information Capabilities

**WHILE THE HISTORY OF THE MONGOLIAN MILITARY DATES BACK** several thousand years, the contribution of the Mongolian Armed Forces to international peace support operations<sup>1</sup> has gained significant momentum only in recent years. Since the first deployment of two military officers as United Nations military observers to the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2002, about 2,000 Mongolian military personnel have served in UN and Coalition peace support operations.<sup>2</sup> This paper examines the evolution of Mongolia's commitment to peace support operations and assesses the capabilities of its Armed Forces to contribute to operational success.

### BACKGROUND

Just as in the case of the *Gurkhas*, the famed Nepalese soldiers, there are historical experiences, features, and characteristics unique to Mongolian culture that enable military personnel to be effective peacekeepers. While historically, Mongolian nomads exhibited the classical warrior spirit, they were also known for their adaptability to any environment and climate. More importantly, contemporary Mongolia has good relations with most other nations around the world. Thus, the warrior spirit, adaptability and Mongolia's neutrality are unique characteristics associated with Mongolia's military that afford them many opportunities to contribute to international peace support operations.

During its early stages of democracy in the late 1980s, Mongolia had a professional military designed to be nearly identical to the Soviet military and heavily focused on linear warfare. The provision of Soviet military weaponry and equipment brought military doctrine, training, structure, and organization similar to that of the former Communist bloc nations. The Mongolian military had previously been tasked to collaborate with Soviet military forces in its Far Eastern Military District, as well as with military units sta-

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<sup>1</sup> The terms "peacekeeping operations" and "peace support operations" have been used interchangeably in Mongolia; however, official documents tend to use "peacekeeping operations" whereas military officials often use "peace support operations" to refer both to UN and coalition activities.

<sup>2</sup> Mongolia today ranks 43rd out of the top 100 troop-contributing UN member states, after starting from scratch in 2002. Rankings of Military and Police Contributions to UN Operations, available online at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko>, were accessed 30 September 2006. This number applies only to Mongolia's contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations, excluding all other commitments to coalition peace support operations.

tioned in Mongolian territory to defend the eastern border of the Communist bloc nations. This military establishment was kept under the control of the civilian leadership of the Communist party, and consisted of a professional officer corps and conscripts.<sup>3</sup>

In the early 1990s, the Sino-Russo rapprochement caused an unexpected drawdown in the Mongolian Armed Forces and political leaders sought ways to employ the Mongolian military while enjoying the peace dividend at the end of the Cold War. There were even public discussions of dismantling the Armed Forces in order to divert the defense budget to other necessities for the people of the country, or to use the manpower in construction projects. The new constitution ruled out dismantling the military and stipulated that Mongolia retain its Armed Forces for self-defense.<sup>4</sup> However, deployment of the Mongolian military for UN peacekeeping operations was not an idea that everyone agreed on, unlike the employment of the Mongolian military during disaster relief operations.<sup>5</sup> This was because during the Cold War the Mongolian military was known for civil defense missions and tasks, similar to those inherent in today's humanitarian disaster relief operations. However, out-of-area missions did not enjoy such public support and Mongolia's military had little knowledge of international peacekeeping operations.<sup>6</sup>

With its new foreign policy orientation toward international engagement, especially the integration of Mongolia into the Asia-Pacific region and a new emphasis on providing for the security of the country through political-diplomatic means, political and military leaders began to understand that peace support operations could complement this aspect of diplomacy. The National Security Concept states that "military-political security can be ensured through a collective security system by joint efforts or participation in such a system," which provides a legal basis for seeking participation in international peace support operations.<sup>7</sup>

In consonance with its foreign and military policy, Mongolia has established bilateral relations with many new partners and at the same time its participation in peace support operations sets the stage for multilateral

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<sup>3</sup> R. Bold, "Security Environment and Development of Military Establishment of the MPR," in *Mongolian Military Tradition and Development* (Institute of Military History, Ulaanbaatar, 1991), 131, 135; Ts. Dashzeveg, *Policy, Goal, Activities for Reform of the Armed Forces* (Ulaanbaatar, 2002), 19-22 (both sources are in Mongolian).

<sup>4</sup> The Constitution of Mongolia, art. 11 (Ulaanbaatar: State Great Hural [Parliament], January 1992) and the Basis of the State Military Policy of Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar: State Great Hural, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> The continental weather of Mongolia causes numerous natural disasters (heavy snowfall, wildfires, flooding etc.), in which all military units have been tasked to support civilian authorities to assist the public. Furthermore, during the Cold War, one of the principal tasks of the military was to be prepared to conduct relief operations.

<sup>6</sup> Until the mid-1990s, there were no training programs nor syllabi for peace support operations for military personnel; in general, literature on peacekeeping operations is scarce.

<sup>7</sup> The Concept of National Security Policy (Ulaanbaatar: 1994), The Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy (Ulaanbaatar: 1994) both available from <http://www.extmin.mn>, accessed 12 January 2007.

cooperation with many of these nations.<sup>8</sup> Gradually, as a result of increasing defense cooperation with foreign countries, especially those with significant peacekeeping expertise and growing public awareness of UN peacekeeping operations, Mongolia in the late 1990s started its long journey toward preparing for and participating in UN peacekeeping operations.

## POLITICAL WILL AND IMPLEMENTATION

Following the adoption of the 1992 Constitution, reform of the Armed Forces became a key concern of political parties in Presidential and Parliamentary elections; this concern later evolved into expressed interest in preparing for peacekeeping operations. As the evolution continued, it became a strong political commitment of the President as well as of the government at large to support the armed force's initiative to participate in international peacekeeping operations. An additional initiative was to establish a regional peacekeeping training center in Mongolia. Government Action Plans in the late 1990s emphasized preparation of military personnel for peacekeeping missions, and those Action Plans following the 2000 and 2006 parliamentary elections reflected even more solid goals.<sup>9</sup>

Beginning in 2000, Mongolia's concept for committing its military to participating in UN peacekeeping operations gained significant support from its political leaders and parties, as well as from the general public. The result of these developments and the Mongolian military leadership's extensive study of peace operations during 1996-2000, plus broad exposure to foreign experts, led to the development of a plan that would enable the Mongolian military to participate in international peacekeeping operations. The development of this plan was done in coordination with Mongolia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs, as well as other government agencies. The plan addressed ways that Mongolia could increase officer and non-commissioned officer training, participate in multinational peacekeeping exercises, host peacekeeping exercises in Mongolia, and procure critical equipment, particularly individual protective gear, communications equipment, and diesel vehicles. The increasing peace support operations capacity of the Armed Forces prompted the Prime Minister to

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<sup>8</sup> Today Mongolia has established official military-to-military relations with 72 countries and concluded governmental-level bilateral defense cooperation agreement with eight countries. B. Batzorig, "Defense Cooperation Opened Many New Opportunities," *Mongolian Military Newspaper, Soyombo*, Issue No. 44 (9995), 1-7 October 2007.

<sup>9</sup> *Action Plan of the Government of Mongolia for 2004-2008* (Ulaanbaatar: 2004), Defense and Foreign Policy Section. The Government Action Plan (2004-2008) advocated that military organizations be transformed to meet the requirements of UN peacekeeping operations and specifically called for the deployment of a battalion for UN peacekeeping operations and the establishment of the National Peacekeeping Training Center to meet international training standards. This policy change was also reflected in Defense White Papers. Although the first *Mongolian Defense White Paper* (1997-1998) did not express a policy for peace support operations, the second *Defense White Paper* outlined government policy toward peace support operations more broadly. *Mongolian Defense White Paper* (Ulaanbaatar: 1998) and *Defense White Paper* (Ulaanbaatar: 2001), 57

assure the United Nations in his statement to the 56th session of the United Nations General Assembly (in 2001) that “Mongolia stands ready to actively cooperate with the United Nations and make a practical contribution to its peacekeeping operations.”<sup>10</sup>

In 2002, the Mongolian Parliament passed legislation that regulates participation of Mongolian military and civilian police personnel in UN peace operations.<sup>11</sup> This legislation also regulates coordination and other responsibilities for Mongolian government agencies, including decision-making procedures for participation in peacekeeping operations. Importantly, the legislation provides for opportunities for military and police personnel to participate in non-UN missions such as coalition and disaster-relief operations. By 2002, Mongolia had established the domestic legal basis for participation, had started to develop national expertise, and was seeking opportunities in peace support operations.

Pursuant to the Government’s Action Plans, the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff introduced changes to policy and structure of the Armed Forces. The General Staff created a new office, the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, placing it in charge of building peacekeeping capacity in the Armed Forces, and of facilitating deployments for peace support operations as well as international exercises. The first-ever peacekeeping battalion, an *Elite Battalion*, a mobile training team and an English language center were set up and a peacekeeping operations training program was developed by the General Staff. In 2005, the Peacekeeping Operations Department was established at the Defense University to develop training programs, to deliver courses on different levels, and to conduct research on peace support operations.<sup>12</sup> At the national governmental level, a coordination committee consisting of representatives of various ministries and agencies was set up for consultation and coordination to support the country’s participation in peace support operations. In 2004, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense posted a Military Advisor at the Permanent Mission at the United Nations to facilitate communication with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at: <http://www.un.int/mongolia/gendeb56.htm>, accessed 12 January 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Defense Legislation (Ministry of Defense, Ulaanbaatar: 2004, Volume III), 136-141.

<sup>12</sup> In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, training in the Law of Armed Conflict was also set up at the Defense University. This training was extended to all officers and non-commissioned officers in 2001-2003.





**Five Hills Training Center, P-5 Exercise, July, 2004.**

Photo courtesy of the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, General Staff of the Armed Forces.

## PEACEKEEPING TRAINING CENTER AND PREPARATION

One of the critical components of peace support operations capacity is the training facility. Political neutrality and a commitment to training opportunities permit Mongolia to train its military personnel and more critically to improve interoperability with the military components of other countries of the region for UN peace support operations. Following an October 2002 discussion between President N. Bagabandi and Secretary-General Kofi Annan, experts from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations recommended that Mongolia organize bilateral and multi-lateral training.<sup>13</sup> The General Staff of the Armed Forces has since organized a number of multilateral training exercises at the Peacekeeping Training Center (known as the Five Hills Training Center), in addition to pre-deployment training/exercises for its own forces.<sup>14</sup>

## U.S. SUPPORT FOR MONGOLIA'S INITIATIVES

Given the considerable new task to prepare for and to participate in peace support operations, the Mongolian military has sought assistance from developed countries through gradually expanding military-to-military relations. In effect, peace support operations have become a new avenue for the development of bilateral relations, especially with certain developed countries.

With the establishment of formal defense cooperation between the two countries in the early 1990s, the United States responded favorably to Mongolia's request to develop peacekeeping expertise by training military officers in the United States and by distance learning under the International Military Education and Training programs (IMET and E-IMET). Additionally, a number of U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) institutes such as the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, the Center for Civil-Military Relations, and the Center of Excellence conducted international seminars attended by Mongolian military and civilian personnel.

Based on its lessons learned from the coalition and United Nations peacekeeping operations as well as from the U.S. Pacific Command-spon-

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<sup>13</sup> President N. Bagabandi offered use of the Peacekeeping Training Center as a Regional Peacekeeping Training Center for the UN during the Secretary General's visit in Mongolia on 16 October 2002. *New Horizons*, the Newsletter of the UN in Mongolia, December 2002 Available on-line: [http://mirror.undp.org/mongolia/publications/new\\_horizons.en.pdf](http://mirror.undp.org/mongolia/publications/new_horizons.en.pdf), accessed 9 January 2007. After a visit in January 2003, UN experts, headed by Captain (Navy) Carolyn Brand, Chief of the Training and Evaluation Service, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, advised the use of bilateral agreements with regional countries to develop the Regional Training Center and to discuss further UN involvement in developing the regional training center. UN involvement would be restricted only to the organization of UN-sponsored training events.

<sup>14</sup> Mongolia has hosted training initiatives with the U.S., the UK, Belgium and India. Mongolian military officers have completed peace operations courses at the United Nations, as well as related peacekeeping and military professional courses in the United States, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, United Kingdom, India, Belgium, Luxemburg and Turkey. The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) has offered training to Mongolian military officers through UN military observer, staff, and logistics courses.

sored exercises, Mongolia is re-considering its defense reform plan and is working closely with the United States to develop a 2,500-man world-class peacekeeping force.<sup>15</sup> This force would consist mostly of mobile infantry with niche capabilities such as military police, engineering, and medical teams. This force could be used to support and sustain future peacekeeping commitments, transform military training institutions, and build the Regional Peacekeeping Training Center for North East Asia. These developments clearly demonstrate that the United States remains determined to assist Mongolia in developing a peace support operations capacity in order to contribute to international peace and security and at the same time to help the Mongolian Armed Forces develop professional military respect for democratic values as stated in three joint statements.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, with a decreasing number of conscripts, the Mongolian military recognized a greater need for competent and experienced non-commissioned officer corps.<sup>17</sup> Admiral William Fallon stressed in his statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, “[O]ur relationship with the Mongolian Armed Forces is stronger than ever and they are eager to contribute even more to supporting regional and global security efforts. Through participation in numerous peacekeeping operations, Mongolia continues to develop its expertise in this arena. They’ve communicated enormous interest in establishing a Peacekeeping Training Center as part of their Five Hills Training Facility and Pacific Command supports this initiative. Pacific Command continues to provide training for both Mongolia’s officer and enlisted corps and the professionalism of their forces reflects their ambitious goals and high standards.”<sup>18</sup>

In August 2006, Mongolia became the first country in the region to organize a multinational peace support operations Command Post Exercise as well as Field Training Exercise with the Global Peace Operations Initiative

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<sup>15</sup> It was officially announced during Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s visit to Mongolia on 23 October 2005. Mark Mazzetti, “Rumsfeld Stops in Mongolia” *LA Times*, 23 October 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Joint Statements, available on-line <http://www.mongolianembassy.us> accessed in 15 January 2007.

<sup>17</sup> The U.S. Army in the Pacific has been working with the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy of Mongolia to develop core curricula for non-commissioned officer leadership and has trained 20 non-commissioned officers at the NCO Academy in Hawaii. The Marine Corps-Pacific started a three-year enlisted leadership development program by embedding U.S. Marine Corps enlisted personnel with Mongolian peacekeeping-designated battalions in 2004.

<sup>18</sup> Testimony of Admiral William J. Fallon, United States Navy, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 8 March 2005. Available on-line: [http://www.pacom.mil/speeches/sst2005/050308fallon\\_sasc.shtml](http://www.pacom.mil/speeches/sst2005/050308fallon_sasc.shtml). Accessed 10 January 2007.

(GPOI) of the U.S. Government.<sup>19</sup> The first exercise involved 1,000 military personnel (400-foreign military, 600-Mongolian military) from 22 countries of the Asia-Pacific region. With the successful completion of this GPOI-funded exercise, Mongolia became eligible to host future training events with GPOI funds.

The General Staff of the Armed Forces has drafted a plan for further development of the Five Hills Training Center as a National Training Center in the short run and a Regional Training Center in the long run, with the U.S. Pacific Command and others as key partners. Mongolia has tailored its military training base as a venue for peace support operations for regional militaries, to thereby improve interoperability and strengthen confidence building among regional nations. However, significant improvements and investment are needed to bring the Training Center to the level of other international training centers.

## BUILDING EXPERTISE THROUGH PARTICIPATION

In 2002, Mongolia dispatched its first two military observers to the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The following year, Mongolia joined coalition operations in Iraq by deploying a reinforced company as well as a mobile training team to support coalition operations in Afghanistan. These deployments were clear tests of Mongolia's commitment to support UN and international coalition peace and security operations. With these historic, long-range strategic deployments (the first in more than 700 years), the Mongolian Armed Forces demonstrated that it can deploy, operate, and sustain company-sized military units in the field for international coalition peace support operations. To date, the Mongolian military has participated in the following operations:

**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM:** This was the first Coalition mission for the Mongolian Armed Forces. Thus, it clearly tested the peace support operations decision-making process, as established by defense legislation. It provided opportunities for the military to validate peace support operations training, to ensure reliability of equipment and weapons, and to conduct military operation in real-world scenarios. In the framework of participation, the military dispatched a liaison team to the U.S. Central Command, sent staff officers to Multinational Force and Division Commands, conducted its first pre-deployment site surveys, and organized a strategic long-range deployment. Since May 2003, Mongolia has remained a steadfast partner in the Coalition, with the deployment of seven rotations to Iraq totaling 900 military personnel.

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<sup>19</sup> The Global Peace Operations Initiative, as proposed by the Bush Administration, is a five-year plan to prepare militaries of other countries, largely African, to participate in peacekeeping operations. Nina M. Serafino, *Peacekeeping and Related Operations: Issues of U.S. Military Involvement* (Congressional Research Service: 27 March 2006), 10, available on-line: <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/64961.pdf>, accessed 15 January 2007.



**Mongolian Military Observers in the Democratic Republic of Congo.**

Photo courtesy of the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, General Staff of the Armed Forces.

## DEPLOYMENT OF MONGOLIAN PERSONNEL



**1 Operation IRAQI FREEDOM**

From August 2003

Personnel assigned to date: 900

Now on station: 131

**2 Afghan National Army Training**

From October 2003

Personnel assigned to date: 95

Now on station: 21

**3 NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR)**

From September 2005

Personnel assigned to date: 70

Now on station: 36

**4 UNMIL (UN Mission in Liberia)**

From January 2006

Personnel assigned to date: 750

Now on station: 250

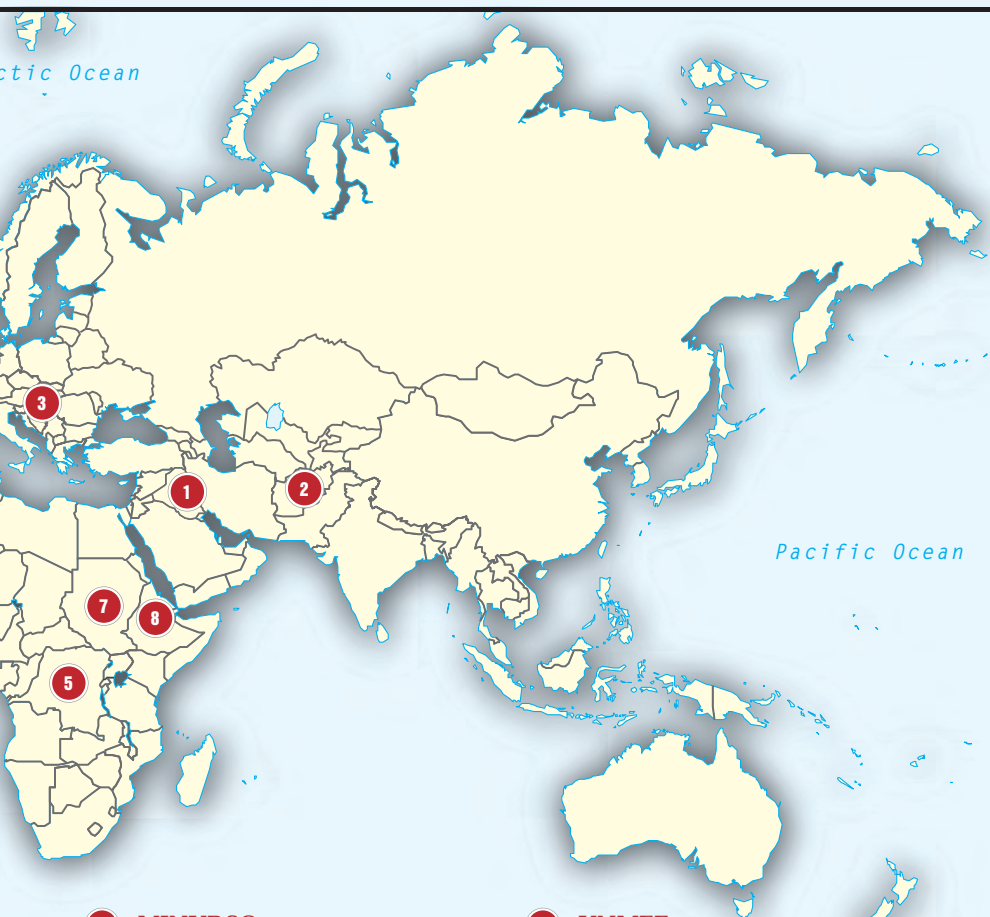
**5 MONUC (UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo)**

From August 2001

Personnel assigned to date: 12



## TO INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS



**6 MINURSO** (*UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara*)  
From December 2002

Personnel assigned to date: 15

**7 UNMIS**  
(*UN Mission in the Sudan*)  
From May 2005

Personnel assigned to date: 4

**8 UNMEE**  
(*UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea*)  
From December 2006

Personnel assigned to date: 5

**9 US CENTCOM**  
(*Central Command*)  
From April 2003

Personnel assigned to date: 7

**AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY TRAINING:** From October 2003, Mongolia's military has offered another contribution to the U.S.-led effort against international terrorism in Afghanistan. The Government approved the dispatch of mobile training teams of field artillery and mortar to Afghanistan to train Afghan artillery specialists and to repair artillery weapon systems of the Afghan National Army. The Mongolian military has deployed a total of 95 personnel with six rotations.

**NATO KOSOVO FORCE (KFOR):** With the assistance of the Belgium Defense Force, the Mongolian Armed Forces have participated in the NATO mission in Kosovo since September 2005.<sup>20</sup> A Mongolian platoon attached to the BELUX company in the French Battalion was Mongolia's first-ever commitment to peace and stability support for the Balkans. About 70 military personnel served in the KFOR.

**UNMIL (UN MISSION IN LIBERIA):** This deployment of Mongolian personnel constitutes the first UN peacekeeping mission where a national unit operates independently from the main UN headquarters in Liberia, as it provides security to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The first rotation of personnel for this mission all benefited from their experience in previous assignments to Coalition Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and in UN Military Observer missions. With the third rotation now on station, 750 Mongolian military personnel have served in Sierra Leone to provide security for the UN High Court.

**MILITARY OBSERVER MISSIONS:** Since 2002, Mongolian officers have participated as military observers in UN peacekeeping missions: MONUC (UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), MINURSO (UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara), UNMIS (UN Mission in the Sudan), and UNMEE (UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea). Furthermore, Mongolia dispatched its first female officer to MINURSO in January 2007. In this short period, 20 military officers have served in these missions and gained invaluable expertise in peacekeeping operations. Officers who have served as UN military observers become a trained cadre for planning and executing peace support operations.

At the political level, Mongolia has followed up on its 2002 legislation related to peace operations by establishing an interagency governmental group dealing with issues of peace support operations deployment. The military has dealt with myriad deployment issues at all levels, ranging from human resource management, pre-deployment training, re-deployment, logistics, operational control of deployed forces, strategic communications, and public affairs. At the tactical level, Mongolian military forces have tested and refined their peacetime training concepts, tactical manuals (many of

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<sup>20</sup> As a geographically small country, Belgium offers generous assistance to Mongolia's development of peace support operations expertise, champions cooperation with NATO in the areas of science, disaster relief, and the environment, and promotes Mongolia's interest in gaining membership in the NATO Partnership for Peace program.



which were modified just before Operation IRAQI FREEDOM) and new concepts of interoperability with foreign military units. As a result of continuous military personnel rotations and international deployments, the Mongolian military has shaped and adapted new ways of handling these issues, to include intelligence.

## INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence has always been a key to the success of any military operation and the same applies to peacekeeping missions. As an emerging source country for troops deployed to peace support operations, Mongolian military personnel face problems of peace support operations intelligence similar to those of other nations, especially those from the East and Central European, former socialist countries.

Mongolia has improved its tactical intelligence capabilities significantly as a result of experiences in coalition operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The deployment of reconnaissance and advance teams has provided critical information on operational areas as well as other required types of battlefield intelligence. Lessons learned from pre-deployment site survey teams have been applied later to other missions and have helped the Peacekeeping Operations Department of the General Staff develop a model for intelligence assessment of peace support operations. Engineering and medical teams, deployed with the Mongolian contingent, have always been a helpful avenue for informative contact between the contingent commander and locals as a means to establish a network with other parties (military and civilian). But even at the tactical level, it was always challenging to integrate with the coalition or UN network. The few Mongolian graduates of the Military Intelligence Basic Course at the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School, Ft. Huachuca, Arizona, were able to coordinate their efforts for information gathering and analysis purposes, but for others it has remained a serious challenge due to a lack of familiarity with Western intelligence structure and procedures. It is also worth mentioning that U.S. Pacific Command-sponsored command-post exercises (CPX) in Mongolia have provided opportunities to understand the standard procedures of multinational staffs.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, the Mongolian military lacks “state of the art” tactical intelligence collection equipment and technology.<sup>22</sup> Considering the high price tag and limited training, Mongolian military intelligence still relies on traditional methods and equipment, but at the same time it needs to adopt more effective ways of collecting and processing tactical intelligence data that may be available through the UN and coalition network.

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<sup>21</sup> All major CPX organized by the U.S. Pacific Command, like Cobra Gold, Balikatan, and the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team exercise, help all participating militaries to understand staff functioning in multinational operations through understanding and applying standard operating procedures for Multinational Forces.

<sup>22</sup> Major Byambaa Chinzorig, Fellow at the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, interview by author, January 2007. Major Chinzorig served at the Multinational Division Headquarters in Iraq and also U.S. Central Command, Tampa, Florida.

Operational and strategic intelligence capabilities for peace support operations are generally absent in Mongolian teams. The Combined Strategic Intelligence Training Program (CSITP) at the U.S. Joint Military Intelligence Training Center (JMITC) offers the best program for coalition intelligence officers, who through this course become familiar with the basics of coalition intelligence analysis at the strategic and operational levels. According to current decision-making procedures for peace support operations deployment, political leaders make their decisions based on professional military recommendations, which are in turn entirely dependent on adequate strategic and operational intelligence. In other words, although strategic and military intelligence may become the principal input for decision-makers at the General Staff, Ministry of Defense and further, to the Government and Parliament, Mongolia has trained few officers in the essential skills of analysis and networking. The few Mongolian graduates of the CSITP have always experienced a high market-demand for their skills and knowledge at coalition headquarters.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the Mongolian military needs to develop its own operational intelligence capacity in non-traditional areas of peace support operations, coalition operations and terrorism. The JMITC could seek ways to create professional development programs tailored for peace support operations and counterterrorism in coalition countries. This would help the coalition countries build their own capacity and expose more professionals. Alternatively, the JMITC could expand the number of seats for coalition members in its in-residence course.

Because of concerns about the security of classified and sensitive information, especially in Coalition Operations, parties are always reluctant to share intelligence in a timely manner. Under these circumstances, open sources become valuable, but such sources may also suffer from biases, in the eyes of coalition countries. It might be helpful if intelligence-sharing procedures were taken into consideration from the start of planning, for example, through formal memoranda of understanding to assure information security. But this could not be done by each contributing country in isolation. Instead, procedures need to be linked and de-conflicted with coalition headquarters intelligence in the field and with UN Headquarters. Prior to deployments, coalition countries could include intelligence-sharing issues in peace support operations exercises in order to build and practice a more robust intelligence network as a prerequisite for graduation to real-world missions. Without accurate, timely intelligence for military operations on the ground, countries contributing troops to coalition operations face difficulties in providing operational command for deployed forces and at the same time, they may face greater restrictions on their flexibility and standing within the coalition.

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<sup>23</sup> All Mongolian officers who have graduated either from the Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course at Fort Huachuca or the Combined Strategic Intelligence Training Program of the Joint Military Intelligence Training Center at the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, have deployed to Coalition Headquarters in Iraq or other staff posts in other missions. Their proficiency and analytical expertise have become a valuable asset domestically and internationally.



**Mongolian Military Personnel in Kosovo.**

Photos courtesy of the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, General Staff of the Armed Forces.

Military intelligence has encountered another challenge in deploying with peace support operations: that of cultural knowledge or familiarity. Iraq, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone have all been “unknown” places for essentially all coalition military intelligence experts. There have been few if any experts in the Mongolian military who are aware of these regions’ history, culture, terrain, climate, language and more importantly, the causes contributing directly to the crisis. For instance, it takes concerted effort to train a country specialist who is able to speak Arabic, and at the same time able to develop a technical database or other necessary expertise for effective exercise of duties in the Middle East, especially in Iraq. Consequently, military intelligence has only slowly accumulated expertise in these areas by deploying in the field. New areas, such as medical intelligence, are also becoming a major concern of military intelligence. For example, intelligence needs to provide accurate information on diseases (such as malaria or “bird flu”) and doctors need to develop preventive measures. Also, for personnel from countries like Mongolia it is equally important to develop a geospatial-intelligence capability to plan and evaluate situations, because geospatial intelligence can provide more accurate information than more readily available commercial maps.

Finally, peace support operations and counterterrorist missions are relatively new developments, in terms of the nature of the threat and risks. Even proficient military intelligence experts possess little expertise in these relatively new areas of concern. Force protection issues become a priority for commanders as well as for intelligence specialists who must take some risks to understand the nature of the threat and then develop ways to reduce those risks. Because no training requirements for urban warfare have existed until now, for example, the Mongolian military lacks appropriate training facilities to teach urban warfare tactics. Beyond that, military intelligence needs to develop a cadre of analysts who are serious experts in many other facets of peace support operations and counterterrorism.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Political leaders as well as the public in Mongolia understand that deployment of the country’s military to UN and Coalition peace support operations increases Mongolia’s visibility and profile in the international arena. This real commitment toward peace and stability of the world will help Mongolia fulfill its obligation to the United Nations as a responsible member. As noted here, and as a result of deployments, the Government has had an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the procedures, inter-agency committees, and working groups established by the relevant legislation for participation in peace support operations, and therefore the opportunity to introduce necessary changes and improvements.

For the military, participation in peace support operations has helped to evaluate force structure, training, equipment, and most importantly the

readiness of military units. It has also brought about some changes in standard operating procedures, or tactics, techniques and procedures, in the relevant training manuals. The military has consciously developed its niche capabilities for peace operations in a manner that best accommodates Mongolia's own national institutions.

## CHALLENGES AHEAD

Mongolia's commitment to international peacekeeping operations has resulted in accumulating valuable lessons in a number of areas, the following issues being some of the most critical:

**POLITICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS:** Even though Mongolia's governmental decision-making procedures for international peacekeeping operations have been established in legislation, there are a number of procedural gaps that need to be closed. For instance, specific duties and responsibilities of various government agencies have not been clearly defined; therefore, the decision-making process becomes an obstacle for military planning and preparation. Also, operational funding issues need to be well-articulated in order to maintain consistent and adequate financial support for pre-deployment and deployment. While it is extremely important to have an interagency working group supporting and addressing the needs of a peacekeeping deployment, it is equally important to provide timely and accurate information for the working group to make decisions. The military needs to set up a mechanism to keep all parties of the inter-agency working group informed with situational updates on current and future operations.

Both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense could prepare a team of legal experts in international law, particularly in legal matters related to military operations. Lack of legal expertise may cause misinterpretations of international law and practices and can result in a lack of legal protection for military personnel deployed in foreign nations. These matters are particularly acute in coalition operations, which are usually established on an ad-hoc basis and require extensive knowledge and expertise in international legal matters.

**TRAINING AND EDUCATION:** It is important to build a "national" training capacity, consisting of trainers and programs for larger numbers of military personnel, to support multiple peacekeeping operation deployments. Therefore, all military personnel with peacekeeping experience should be rotated through military schools and other major army training centers so that their knowledge and experiences can be circulated through training and education institutions to all levels of the Armed Forces. The Mongolian Defense University could become a training hub for the Mongolian Armed Forces for peacekeeping operations deployments.

Education and research should play a key role in reaching politicians, as well as the public in general. Research materials need to be circulated in

an open manner, and educational courses for different levels can be organized to assist politicians and the public so that they can gain a clear idea about the nature, purpose, and results of peacekeeping operations.

**WEAPONRY AND EQUIPMENT:** In the case of Mongolia, it becomes critical to modernize weaponry and equipment that are closely linked to force protection and security. For instance, communications equipment, night vision goggles, and individual protective gear should be provided to augment security for contingents, thus enabling them to perform their tasks and accomplish missions. “Mongolian troops are highly skilled on that weapon and equipment,[but] they are not interoperable with the rest of the coalition members...it is top priority for Mongolia to equip...with modern weapons and equipment that could meet the future peace operations requirements.”<sup>24</sup> The modernization of equipment and vehicles remains the most difficult challenge.

**HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES:** Considering the rapid increase in peace support operations and the significant drawdown of manpower in the early 1990s, the Mongolian military now finds it difficult to provide trained personnel for peace support operations. Peacekeeping operations, with their varied perceptions by the public, require the reform of military recruiting, training, and retention policies. Otherwise, over time, multiple peacekeeping deployments can overload and stress critical portions of a military by relying on small numbers of well-trained cadre for repeat peacekeeping missions, thus potentially damaging their personal morale and welfare. More importantly, the development of non-commissioned officers will bring its own requirements for training and deployment.

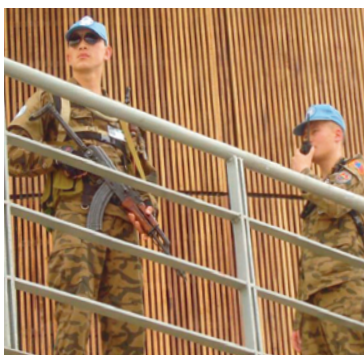
**LANGUAGE:** Due to nature of UN and coalition peace support operations, which are mostly conducted either in English or French, the Mongolian military finds that language could be a critical factor for mission success. For instance, the Mongolian platoon in Kosovo lacks French-speaking personnel to facilitate interoperability with forces in the French sector, while military forces in Iraq always deployed with a few officers and non-commissioned officers who could communicate with coalition forces at operational and tactical levels.<sup>25</sup> Also, it becomes critical to deploy military translators, who are capable of communicating in local languages, such as those used by military forces in Iraq (Arabic) and Afghanistan (Dari and Pashtu). The United States Department of Defense assists the Mongolian Armed Forces in developing

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<sup>24</sup> LTC B. Bayarmagnai, “Challenges Facing Mongolia’s Participation in Coalition Military Operations,” *USAWC Strategy Research Project* (U.S. Army War College. Carlisle Barracks: 2005), 15. LTC B. Bayarmagnai led the first Mongolian contingents in both Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and the UN Mission in Liberia.

<sup>25</sup> A number of Mongolian rotations in Iraq experienced a shortage of officers and non-commissioned officers capable of cooperating with the coalition forces in operational English; therefore, Mongolia requested U.S. staff embeds to assist Mongolian rotations to fill staff posts at division and force headquarters. The Alaska National Guard deploys two guardsmen with Mongolian forces in Iraq and it has thus provided opportunities for cross training.





### **Mongolian Military in Sierra Leone.**

Photos courtesy of the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, General Staff of the Armed Forces.

its English-language training capacity by training language instructors as well as setting up English language labs with training materials. It remains necessary to train key officers and non-commissioned officers in the U.S. course in particular, which in turn enables them to plan and execute military operations in cooperation with other coalition forces.

**INTEROPERABILITY:** Interoperability has been a challenging issue in all areas of operation for the forces deployed to UN and coalition peace support operations. The disparity of command-and-control structure, organization, operating manuals, tactics, equipment, and logistics creates difficulties in streamlining coalition operations. Almost all rotations of the Mongolian military in Iraq have faced these exact difficulties. For example, according to Lieutenant Colonel Narantulga “there were significant gaps of equipment and standards between U.S. and Mongolian militaries plus great differences in command control structure...Alaskan guardsmen helped us to overcome these challenges by being coordinators with coalition forces, and also advisors for us to understand U.S. concepts, tactics, techniques and procedures.”<sup>26</sup> Bilateral and multilateral training events and liaison exchanges should eventually help to mitigate these challenges of interoperability for future operations.

## CONCLUSION

The Mongolian Armed Forces have consistently demonstrated an ability to fulfill commitments as an emerging, steadfast contributor to UN peacekeeping as well as to coalition peace support operations. These commitments provide an opportunity for the Mongolian government to contribute to global peace and security in a highly visible way. But Mongolia needs to apply all lessons learned from its experiences in past and current international peace operations and overcome challenges which are inherent for a country only emerging as a contributing member of the UN and of multinational coalitions. Like many other nations, Mongolia expects to develop its intelligence capacities for peace support operations in order to integrate and operate more effectively with UN and other coalition forces.

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<sup>26</sup> Colonel Danzandorj Narantulga, Fellow at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, interview by author, January 2007. Colonel Narantulga commanded the fourth rotation of troops in Iraq and was posted as commander of the second Mongolian peacekeeping battalion prior to his schooling at the U.S. Army War College.





### **Mongolian Military Trainers in Afghanistan.**

Photos courtesy of the Department of Peace Support Operations and Cooperation, General Staff of the Armed Forces.



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